Anandashram Series No. 2

AT THE
FEET OF GOD

By

SWAMI RAMDAS
(Author of "In Quest of God" etc.)

FOURTH EDITION

1949



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PREFACE

TO THE FIRST EDITION

Ramdas himself has honoured me by asking me to write a preface to his book.

If one were asked what the whole world, to a man, was seeking, one could answer truthfully—

HAPPINESS

Ramdas has found that happiness; that intense, never-fading joy; that perfect bliss which comes from God-realization.

I have watched him sunk in this bliss. I know it is no pose. I see the wonder, and have listened to the secret. It lies in these fragments he has written; but it lies more in the pure human heart if it will open itself out to GOD.

Ramdas stands out in our desert of life like those little white flowers that grow in isolated clumps in sandy deserts, and we too would wish to know from what unknown source comes the sweetness; that we may also drink, from that deep, hidden nourishment.

The source is devotion to God by whatever name you choose to call Him: Devotion to Him and His Glorious Name.

This is Ramdas' creed; he has no other.

Hindu, Muhammedan and Christian have stood abashed before his gentleness. He is loved alike by one and all. He loves equally.

Still I hear the refrain of his voice singing, always singing OM SHRI RAM! JAI RAM! JAI JAI RAM! and the silent hills of Mt. Abu seem to take up the refrain.

Simple, child-like Ramdas! Of such is truly the Kingdom of Heaven.

SHRI KRISHNA NIVAS,
LIMBDI,
31st January 1927.

ELIZABETH SHARPE

POEMS

THE SONG ETERNAL

We are the ripples on the face
Of the infinite ocean bright;
We are the tiny glow that strays
From the eternal blazing light.

We are the sparks that flit and spring
From a pageant vast of fire;
We are the dulcet notes that ring
Upon the eternal lyre.

We are the whispers — the echoes
Of the thunders of space;
We are the twinkling star that goes
To deck the heavenly face.

We are the whiffs, struggles and gasps
Of a world in mortal throes;
We are a puny child that clasps
Delusion — as its mother's brows.

We are the drops — the dripping drops
Of the drizzling monsoon rain;
We are the tender blades of crops
That feed the million train.

We are the dust — the sands that make
This Earth — the sphere of strife;
We are the dreamers that long to wake
From the empty dream of life.

We are the moments lone of Time —
Single breaths of eternity;

We are the blossoms that fade and pine
In the garden — Divinity.

We are the fickle shifts of wind —
That subtle cloak of Earth;
We are the silken cords that bind
The Universe in its birth.

We are the fading, crumbling leaves
Of a mighty Book — of sad line;
We are the golden thread that weaves
The fabric of Life Divine.

We are the stones that form to shape
The pyramids of old;
We are the tiny gems that gape
In the ornaments of gold.

We are the little acts that move
The worlds in their destined run;
We are the simple rays of Love
That crowd around — the One.

We are the transient shades that float
On the measureless space and air;
We are the little cries that dote
Upon glossy things of care.

We are the thrills that are absorbed
In the trembling of the spheres;
We are the dew-drops golden-orbed
In Nature's early tears.

We are a slender touch of Thought
Of the Universal Mind;
We are a gleam — a flash that is caught
From a Vision Illumined.

RAM

Ram is the softness of moonlight
Ram is the glint of stars at night
Ram is the blaze of sun on high
Ram is the blueness of the sky.
Ram is the whiteness of the cloud
Ram is thunderous voice proud
Ram is lightning's blinding flash
Ram is the raining downward dash.

FREEDOM

O mind, swim in the ocean of Love,
Spreading below, around, above;
O mind, bask in the flood of Light
That dispels the darkness of the night;
O mind, bathe in the fountain of Bliss,
True delight wilt thou never miss.
Let Truth be thy shield,
Let Light be thy guide,
Let Love be thy weapon,
Let Bliss be thy aim,
Perfect freedom then attain.

FEAST

Perennial springs of Love are bubbling everywhere.
Continuous streams of Joy are flowing everywhere.
Unbroken waves of Light roll on everywhere.
The great Truth itself holds the feast everywhere.

MOTHER

O Mother, how sweet is the smile on Thy face,
That lovely sign of Thy infinite grace!

O Mother, how soft is the touch of Thy palm,
That soothes the pains as a cooling balm!
O Mother, how pure is Thy spotless heart,
That yearns and yearns like the aim, the dart!
O Mother, how pleasing is Thy tuneful voice,
That makes the heart for ever and for ever rejoice!
O Mother, how gentle is Thy entwining arm,
That guards and saves from every harm!
O Mother, how kind, how loving you are,
The child is ever secure in Thy fond care!

LORD

O Lord, how glorious is Thy potent name!
It speaks of Thy might and extols Thy fame.
O Lord, how kind, merciful and just!
Carest for all who place in Thee full trust.
O Lord, how grand majestic is Thy form!
In wind and rain Thou livest in storm.

LOVE

Love gilds the rays of the blazing sun;
Love softens the moonlight rays;
Love peeps through the twinkling stars;
Love cools the blowing breeze;
Love hovers over hills in hazy mist;
Love lends greenness to the leaves and grass;
Love sings sweetly through the tiny throats of birds;
Love dances nimbly in the flowing stream;
Love fills the heaven above and the earth below;
Love alone survives and all passes away.
For Love is Ram — Ram is only Love, love, pure love.
Live the real life — full of love — full of bliss.

LOVE

Love shines in the rays of Light;
Love sings in the passing breeze;
Love hovers over the scented rose;
Love tunes the throats of birds;
Love tints the green and yellow leaves;
Love lends the blueness to the sky;
Love smiles upon the baby's face;
Love grows as verdure on the plain;
Love softly flows as running stream;
Love drips through the martyr's wounds;
Love peeps through the mother's eyes;
Love soothes the striving soul;
Love wakes the hero's valour;
Love softens the tyrant's heart;
Love gains over very hate.
O, what can Love not do?
Love makes a heaven of hell.
O Love, All hail! All hail!

SELF-SURRENDER

Offer thy all to Ram, and rest content; no sorrow then dare approach thee.
Thou art secure under the powerful protection of Ram.
Behold! Ram's will alone is supreme; bend and bow to that will.
Come what may, it is Ram who does all, and He does all for good.
For Ram is kind, Ram is love, Ram means always well.
Let the thought of Ram ever dwell in thy mind;
never Him forget; thou art freed, thou are saved.

THE GOAL

Seek the feet of the Lord alone;
There find true rest and peace.
For all the past do atone;
Strive the Lord to please.

Thou art a mere thing of clay;
The Lord dwelleth in thee.
The world is but His divine play,
Ever His servant be.

The Lord is ever kind and good;
He points the right path.
Take it and struggle on;
And give up greed, and lust and wrath.

CONCENTRATION ON RAM

O Mind, dwell not amidst scenes that pass away;
Let Ram—the Supreme Being—ever on thee hold His sway.
O Mind, give up all desires that sting thee like scorpion bites;
Take up the thought of Ram and soar to Elysian heights.
O Mind, wander not, struggle not to reach the fruitless quest;
Be steady, fixed on Ram, and earn eternal rest.
O Mind, all thoughts are fraught with pains, fears and cares,
Except the one of Ram the stamp of bliss ever bears.

THE PATH OF BHAKTI

The radiant path that leads to the holy feet of Ram is found.

No need to grope in the dark; no need to perplex the mind.
The royal road is straight and short; it is easy to tread.
No thorns—no obstacles—beset the smooth and flowery way.
Bhakti leads thee on with the light of faith.
Love Ram with all thy might; Ram is the goal.
Resign, surrender thy all to Ram, and remain ever free.
Then Ram gives thee bliss eternal; permanent peace is thine.
Give up all other paths; take this alone for once.
Thou art saved—Ram saves—the blissful feet of Ram are reached.
No struggle, no pains, no self-imposed trials need be.

WAKE UP

Ram's glorious voice speaks;
Wake up, wake up to the Reality.
The sun is rising in the east,
To shed a flood of His resplendent light.
The clouds are lit, the silver lining shines
The heavens above—a vast blue dome;
O wake up, wake up to the Reality.
Behold the wavy line of distant hills,
The horizon is painted with the bronze hue.
The new day has come—a beauteous day,
That heralds Hope, Love and God;
O wake up, wake up to the Reality.
The green fields smile at the advent of the day,
The dewy grass seem as though bestrewed with pearls,
The leaves of trees flutter in the cool morning breeze.

The water in the valleys sings as it flows, her charming song;
O wake up, wake up to the Reality.
Birds—the sweet minstrels of the air—are on the wing,
The herd of cows slowly wend their way to the pasture land,
The night is gone, the day has come,
The day of joy—the joy that never fades;
O wake up, wake up to the Reality.

OFFERINGS

O tongue, you have no other speech than to chant the sweet and charming name of Ram.
O ears, you have no other music than to listen to the glorious voice of Ram.
O eyes, you have no other vision than to see the Divine image of Ram.
O mind, you have no other thought than to meditate upon the Beloved Ram.
O body, you have no other occupation than to wear yourself out in the service of your Master Ram.

LOVE, LIGHT AND BLISS

Love pervades all and that is Ram,
Light shines upon all and that is Ram.
Bliss deluges all and that is Ram.
Love, Light and Bliss mingle together and that is Ram.

TALKS WITH THE MOTHER AND HER SOLUTIONS OF THE CHILD'S DIFFICULTIES

(1)

Q. *What is the goal?*

A. To attain Ram.

Q. What is self-surrender?

A. Resignation to the Will of God.

Q. How can we attain this?

A. By continued remembrance of God.

Q. What is Ram?

A. He is at once Light, Love and Bliss. He is the only eternal Truth.

Q. Where can we seek Him ?

A. Seek and find Him in ourselves and in the whole universe about us. God has manifested Himself as the universe. The one supreme Paramatman, who is by nature formless and without qualities and ever existent, has assumed the variety of forms that we see in the universe. Let us see Him in all things and beings as the One Imperishable Reality.

Q. What is the result of self-surrender?

A. Self-surrender brings pure everlasting bliss.

Q. How?

A. When the human will is given up for the Divine Will, all the responsibility of the instrument—the devotee—ceases and the consciousness of the individual ego is merged in the Divine consciousness. Then all his actions, thoughts and words emanate from the Divine source, leaving him entirely free from all doubts, desires and bonds. In fact the devotee becomes filled with supreme bliss, on which alone his mind constantly dwells. The ego being absent, there is nothing

on which his actions, words and thoughts can leave any impression. He is now free from all sin and sorrow. He is merely a witness, dispassionate and blissful, of the grand play or lila of God—the universe and all that is in it.

Q. Can we see God?

A. Yes, we can see Him in His works; in His manifestation He pervades all. There is no place where He is not. Every object is none other than He.

Q. If God is one why does He appear in different names and forms?

A. The one has appeared as many for the working out of His lila or play.

Q. What underlies the appearance of many?

A. The qualities, satwa, rajas and tamas. The objects appear different according as any one of these qualities is predominant in it.

Q. What relation do these qualities bear to our complete resignation to the Will of God?

A. In the condition of perfect resignation to the Will of God, the devotee rises above the three qualities and becomes essentially Divine. He becomes a mere instrument in the hands of the Almighty God. He then fulfils the work of God; he is made to exist only for that purpose. Truly he is then an incarnation of God Himself as Sri Krishna, Jesus Christ, Mahomed, Buddha, Sri Krishnachaitanya and other Mahapurushas.

(2)

Q. *O Mother,* your name is Ram. *What is your form* since name and form always go together?

A. I am without name and form. To realise me, as without these, O Ramdas, you have first to assume me as having them.

Q. You are one, but the universe is full of diversity; it is made up of millions of forms. How is this, Mother?

A. I am one, formless and nameless. I choose to be many. Hence I have to assume forms without which I cannot be many.

Q. You are eternal, but how is it that your forms are perishable?

A. It is as it should be. When One is real, many must be unreal. So form is born, remains for a time and then dies; birth, change, growth and dissolution — that is the nature of forms.

Q. How can you exist, O Mother, when your forms perish?

A. Just as, child, the gold remains even after the ornament is melted, during which process it loses its form, as also in the case of a lump of ice, which loses its form under heat, but the water, of which it is made, remains.

Q. Why did you wish to be many?

A. I desired to have a play, and a play cannot be, unless there be more than one. Hence I had to manifest myself as many.

Q. What do you gain by this play?

A. Anandam — supreme bliss.

Q. How can you speak of bliss, O Mother, when the world is seen to be full of misery?

A. Understand, my child, it is I myself acting as miserable, happy, angry, etc.

Q. How can you be acting as miserable and remain unaffected at the same time?

A. Acting is always an appearance; it does not affect the actor. An actor pretends to be weeping while all the time he remains internally, at heart, unmoved. So also with all other feelings and emotions.

Q. What is this play of yours made of?

A. It is made of three qualities, satwa, rajas and tamas — harmony, activity and dullness.

Q. How is variety seen in this diversity?

A. By countless modes of combinations of these three qualities. These three gunas make together what is called Prakriti.

Q. O Mother, are you separate from Prakriti?

A. O child, Prakriti exists because of me, but I am not in Prakriti.

Q. Is Prakriti eternal?

A. Individually not, but collectively she is. Bear in mind always that Prakriti has only a relative existence and not absolute. I am the only Absolute.

Q. If sorrow and pain are unreal, why should there be sympathy, compassion, charity, love, truth, goodness, purity and such virtues in this world?

A. Realisation of the state in which this world is witnessed as a play, can be attained only by recognising me as one, appearing as many. The three gunas have to be transcended before absolute unity is realised. Now this oneness is attained only through the practice of universal love, purity, truth, compassion and charitable deeds.

Q. What is this realisation?

A. This realisation makes you only a blissful witness of the play of the three gunas and thus remain always free from all the effects of pleasure and pain and other pairs of opposites, yourself untouched and unaffected. Then it is that you will have realised the fact, 'You are as myself'.

(3)

Q. Now *what is action, O Mother?*

A. A movement of the mind in thoughts, of the tongue in talk, and of the body in deeds, is action.

Q. What relation do words, deeds and thoughts bear to each other?

A. Sometimes thought alone works, without expressing itself into words and deeds; at other times thought works expressing itself into words only. Again thought works itself out into words and deeds; and lastly thought works out directly into deeds.

Q. How many kinds of action are there?

A. Action is of two kinds — personal and impersonal — sakama and nishkama.

Q. What is sakama or personal action?

A. Action, performed with the desire for the fruit of it, is sakama.

Q. What is nishkama or impersonal action?

A. Action, performed without the desire for the fruit of it, is nishkama.

Q. Which is the proper action?

A. Nishkama action is the proper action.

Q. Why?

A. Because nishkama action alone frees one from the fetters of pain and grief.

Q. How does sakama karma forge these fetters?

A. Every fruit you desire for your action is fraught with pain, since all objects you wish for are perishable in their nature. Besides, they have also the power of giving you pain during possession.

Q. Then why are people in pursuit of those objects and why do they perform action only for such things?

A. Ignorance of the truth of things is the cause.

Q. What is the truth?

A. Truth is that the pursuit of these things always ends in misery.

Q. How can this ignorance go?

A. Only by recognising the existence of an eternal, all powerful, all pervading, all blissful, all peaceful, all loving God as residing within your own heart, and by realising that you are not the body.

(4)

Q. O Sriram, O Mother, you have made Ramdas assume sannyas with the object of consecrating his whole life — in thought, word and deed — to you and to you alone. You have also blessed him with the realisation that you are the sole doer, and that your will alone is supreme. Now if Ramdas' mind wanders, who is responsible? *How is it, O Mother, you allow your child's mind to wander?*

A. All, all is myself, O child; wherever your mind wanders, it wanders in me and rests on me.

Q. True; but why then the thought in Ramdas that it wanders? It shows that Ramdas is still not firm in his faith that you are all; otherwise he would not say his mind wanders. Why have you kept him, O Mother, so weak in faith?

A. When you say it wanders, my child, it is only an expression of a process which you cannot understand. I am permeating, pervading through, all; in fact I am everything. All forms are myself. All acts are myself; all thoughts are myself. You cannot reason why and how this is so; but it is the one great Truth. You cannot comprehend it; but you can realise it.

Q. Why should Ramdas not comprehend it?

A. Because it is a thing beyond understanding, beyond the range of the intellect.

Q. Then explain, O Mother, why should there be an intellect at all and what are its functions?

A. The intellect exists, O Ramdas, only to know that you do not know anything.

Q. Now, what is this life?

A. Know once for all that it is only a dream. I am one indivisible, eternal, formless being. You also are the same. To realise this, you have, for a time, to assume that I am the sole doer and that I am all forms; but really I have neither form, nor am I the doer.

Q. What are you then?

A. I am simply incomprehensible and cannot be described in words. This also is merely a dream, that you question and I reply. There are no two but only one, one, one always.

Q. You say, O Mother, that this life is a dream; but things appear so real, especially pain and misery.

A. They only appear so, child; just as a mirage appears real; they have no real existence.

Q. But the pain is felt; it cannot be avoided; under pain a man cries.

A. So also you cry with pain or fear in your dreams; but after waking you appear so silly in your own eyes for having done so. Your experience there is as unreal as your experience here.

Q. But how to realise this truth?

A. Either by directly recognising yourself to be that which is always free from all pleasure and pain, or, before reaching this state, by realising yourself to be all bliss itself without a touch of pain.

Q. What about pain then?

A. Pain will be no pain to you. It will not affect you at all, or it will be felt as pure bliss.

Q. How to realise this?

A. Meditate always on me as eternal peace, or as bliss, or as both; then you will have both peace and bliss under all conditions.

Q. What is this state of bliss or peace?

A. This state is beyond dwandwas, beyond the three gunas, therefore eternal in nature, with two apparent

aspects, the positive and the negative ones. The positive aspect is bliss, the negative one is peace.

Q. How can one attain the positive aspect or bliss?

A. Bliss can be enjoyed only by partially accepting the illusion of the universe as existent. It exists only for a short time. Take it as a form assumed by me for the sake of play or lila, and take yourself also as a form of mine.

Q. Now, how to attain peace?

A. Peace is complete absorption of your mind in me. For then there is no play to witness. You discard it entirely as illusion. By stilling all your senses and the activities of your mind, you merge in unshakable and eternal peace.

Q. Which is the better state, of peace or of bliss?

A. Both are equally good.

Q. What should your child choose?

A. All are my children; let them have bliss as long as their body lasts and then let them enter into peace.

Q. What must be done to attain bliss?

A. Take the whole universe as myself. First have intense love for me; then that will be for the universe as well; because I am the universe itself. Move in it, feeling yourself one with it, i.e., one with all things and beings in it. The result of this union through love is bliss.

Q. How is peace attained?

A. By merging yourself in samadhi which is complete absorption in me.

Q. Can one have the experience of both states?

A. Yes, one can remain either in eternal peace or in eternal bliss, as one chooses.

Q. Then this world is both a play and a dream?

A. It is neither a play nor a dream; it is simply nothing; only I am.

Q. You are a puzzle then, O Mother. What is the solution of it?

A. The only solution is to say "I am a mystery".

(5)

Q. *O Mother, what is karmayoga?*

A. The state, in which action is performed by an individual while he remains all the time in union with me, is karmayoga.

Q. What are the conditions for such action?

A. Such action is possible only after the attainment of perfect knowledge or jnana. Then action becomes spontaneous. The Divine energy in all its potency and glory is then flowing through you, transforming itself into action.

Q. What is the nature of such action?

A. This action covers a vast field, like a mighty wave; the main object of it being to establish Love, Unity, and Dharma in place of hatred, dissension, adharma.

Q. What is the test of karmayoga?

A. Perfect equality, and welfare of the world, are the tests.

Q. How can one fit oneself for such action?

A. One has to surrender oneself entirely to my will. One's individual consciousness must merge into the cosmic or universal consciousness. One becomes then the chosen instrument in my hands. Great works proceed from me, then, through individuals. The great vibhutis, the Divine workers, such as the avatars, prophets, messiahs and saviours of the world are individuals of this type.

Q. Now what is the ego or ahankar or the "I"?

A. Ego is a false superimposition of a separate individual entity on Existence.

Q. Why should there be this "Ego"?

A. It is there because of ignorance. I have, in order to have my world-play or lila, put on the veil of this ignorance and have thus multiplied myself into innumerable forms retaining in each of them this ego, born of ignorance.

Q. How can this ignorance go?

A. By my grace, at the dawn of knowledge or jnana.

Q. What is jnana?

A. Jnana is the realisation that I alone am real, that I am one, indivisible, eternal Truth, that I am seated in the hearts of all beings, that I am the sole doer. This jnana drives away ignorance, and along with it the ego. It is then realised that diversity is only apparent. All these varied forms which are inconstant, transient and perishable are only the manifestation of one everlasting Reality.

Q. What is the attitude of a jnani towards the world?

A. A jnani sees me everywhere as everything. "That thou art — all art Thou — O Mother" — he says.

Q. What is Bhakta?

A. Bhakta is my devotee who has attained jnana.

Q. What is the attitude of a Bhakta towards You?

A. "He is distinct from me, but ever united with me". I am in him and he is in me. He seeks my fellowship, my company, and worshipping me through love receives in return my boundless love.

Q. What is his object?

A. His object is to maintain a thin ego of a devotee of mine, and, by the intermingling of our love, to enjoy eternal bliss.

Q. How does he move in the world?

A. He looks upon the world as myself, and loves all alike, thus creating a very ocean of love, and ever swimming in it to his eternal joy.

Q. What is the nature of a Bhakta's ego?

A. It is the ego of a child, a servant, a lover or a friend as directed towards his mother, master, lover, or friend. A bhakta has "love, service and humility" as the key-note of his life. He is perfectly unselfish. He is ever free from all desires of the senses. He is pure, forgiving, calm, peaceful, contented, harmless, compassionate, truthful, humble and blissful.

(6)

Q. *What is self-surrender?*

A. Complete and unqualified submission to the Divine will is self-surrender.

Q. How to attain this?

A. Realise once for all that the Divine will alone is the reality, the sole truth, and that that will alone prompts, actuates, guides, leads, and works in all beings, in all creatures, in all things in this world; that your thoughts, words and deeds are the thoughts, words and deeds of that Divine Power that resides in, and permeates, your whole being. Know that you are entirely under the control of that beneficent, ever-active, all-loving and all-powerful eternal Power.

Q. But doubts arise. How to prevent them?

A. Doubts signify that the surrender is not complete. You have to give them up. Rise above the body consciousness and your doubts vanish. Remain in this state always in waking, dream and sleep states.

Q. How to rise above the body consciousness?

A. By making your mind dwell always on Sriram, who is eternal, who is without form, who is one, one sole truth.

Q. What about the movements and actions of the body?

A. The movements and actions of the body, then, take place spontaneously without the mind taking any

notice of them, without its planning for, or calculating on them. Then actions leave no impression on the mind. Impressions on the fettered mind give rise to doubts. Let the mind find its freedom, purity, peace and bliss in Sriram.

Q. Then how can the Divine will be working?

A. When you dwell always in the one concentrated — nay, intoxicated — state, in Sriram, and all your actions resolve into a perfect harmony, then it is that the Divine will of Sriram works in you. You do not now offer any resistance to the free play of His will. You are in perfect tune with Him. He is ever pure. He is ever free. So your actions, your words, your thoughts become pure and harmonious. Now your self-surrender is complete.

Q. What is necessary, first and last, for perfect self-surrender?

A. Unshakable faith in Sriram and His will. Nothing short of this. Take thorough refuge in Him. Give up all fear, all anxiety, all doubts, all thoughts of weakness. You have put yourself under the guidance and control of an all-powerful being. Let Him do what He pleases with you. Give up 'I and mine'! Make no plans. Let nothing of the past and future disturb you. Sriram is the sole doer, and you are His child, His servant. Your 'I and mine' has no existence. It is all He, He alone. Submit, resign, surrender yourself to him. Be always cheerful, peaceful and blissful. In this state you should always remain. This is your goal. Sriram is always in you and you are always in Him. He and you are one. This is the Truth.

VISIONS, THOUGHTS AND TEACHINGS

(1) VISIONS

There was a Vision — the boy Krishna was seen dancing, playing upon his flute. He was slender, blue in colour; except an yellowish cloth worn round his waist he was bare of clothing; on his neck was hanging a string of pearls. His head was adorned with a crown of gold set in gems. His black curls of hair were falling over his shoulders from beneath the crown. There were gold bracelets on his arms and gold belt set with gems round his upper arms. The flute was of gold and at both ends of it were hanging clusters of pearls strung on red silk thread. His ankles were adorned with bangles made of gold. His face — Srikrishna's face! There was a heavenly glow upon it. The eyes — Oh the look of them was simply bewitching, enchanting. The lips — those sweet charming lips were smiling, Oh what a smile — a smile that can draw to him all the worlds. His cheeks — Oh how soft and radiant are those cheeks; the reflection of those enchanting eyes and of the smile of those charming lips was dancing on those lovely cheeks. Those half-opened blood-red lips were revealing the finest set of milk-white teeth. Those beautiful ears were decked with rings and pendants set in diamonds, emeralds and rubies. What a gait when Krishna dances! He is swimming in the air. Oh the sweetness of the music that was coming out of that blessed flute! It sent thrills after thrills of unutterable bliss into the soul of the hearer. Altogether he was a veritable personification of the most heavenly music. Ecstasy, bliss and love seemed to have assumed human form. His well-shaped small feet were dancing, keeping time with the eternal music of his magic flute. Oh — what a sight, the very Gods might envy such a sight! Glorious, glorious indeed is Thy play, O Krishna.

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Another Vision — Face of Buddha. Oh what a face! The eyes were closed, the lips were shut, the broad forehead was smooth and bare, the cheeks were full but softly curved, the chin was chiselled to a perfect shape, ears were exquisite in symmetry. Serenity was stamped upon these lowered eyelids. The lips were indicating nothing but peace. There was a cool lustre upon those soft cheeks. Calmness and firmness reigned upon that chin. Nobility and grandeur were enthroned upon that vast forehead. The bare head presented coal black wavy hair gently resting on his majestic shoulders. His marble neck was superb and handsome. Oh what a face! Heaven was upon that face. To look on it is to enjoy everlasting peace. O blessed face — thou art *Shanti* personified.

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Yet another Vision — there was a hazy light in a room. On an armchair was sitting the world-renowned Mahatma Gandhi — a short piece of white khaddar covered his waist. He was dark in colour, lean and bent, but on his face was the very light of God. His eyes were brilliant and there was a contemplative look in them. Ramdas was sitting on the floor about two yards in front of him. Wonder of wonders — almost visible rays of irresistible attraction were issuing out of him. Ramdas felt he was being drawn towards him with a powerful force, as though a strong magnet was drawing towards it a tiny needle. Ramdas could sit no longer. He stood up, but could not maintain the posture. He was unconsciously drawn to Mahatma Gandhi. Now his erect posture changed and he stood at an angle — his head leaning towards the Mahatma. To avoid a fall he moved towards the chair and walked up to the back of the chair and there he stood in a state of trance.

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(2) RAM

Ramdas was out walking up to the hills. The sky was cloudy — a heavy down-pour of rain was expected. Ramdas would not mind the rain. He carried no umbrella. He was going heedless of the coming rain. Ram thought that if he was thus allowed to wander on the hills he would get drenched in rain, Ram is always kind and loving. His concern about His humble devotees is so great that He is ever on the watch to take care of them. Ramdas was half-way. He was going on one of the roads of Kasaragod leading to the hills when suddenly he was apprised by a passer by — Ram Himself — of a call for him from a certain direction. He turned round and found a widowed mother beckoning him from a compound to his right. Immediately, Ramdas retraced a few steps and entering the compound went into her house as invited. He was heartily welcomed by four mothers in the house, and they asked him to sit down on a mat spread for him. Ramdas took his seat. The kind mothers then put him several questions on bhakti and God. Ramdas was happy to speak on those subjects. While he was doing so, it commenced to rain heavily accompanied by a terrible storm. O Ram, as you did not want your slave to be caught in the storm, you brought him for shelter under the hospitable roof of your loving devotees. *Your kindness and love,* O Ram, are indeed boundless.

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How wonderfully magnificent is *Thy Glory,* O Ram! In the terrors of the storm, in the tremendous rush of the waters, in the awful midnight silence of the hills, in the dreadful sweep, moan and hiss of the wind, in the dead stillness of the far away solitude, Thou residest in all Thy grandeur and majesty. Thy power and greatness are made manifest in these inspiring works of Thine. Away, away the petty thoughts of an insignificant worldly life. Rise, O mind, to loftier heights, and lose thyself in the Almighty Ram — the first and the only Cause, the Truth,

the Reality, that has manifested itself as this limitless universe. Thou art indeed the creator, the preserver and the destroyer of the worlds. All hail! All hail!

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O Ram, *Thy greatness* is indeed unparalleled. Thou art the one of loving parent of the whole universe. Thou art extremely kind to those who place all trust in Thee. Thou art love, love, pure unalloyed love. Thy greatness lies in Thy infinite love. To know Thee as love, pervading all the world, is to enjoy continued bliss. Thy love makes the whole world kin. To see Thee in all beings and things is to love Thee and receive Thy unbounded love in return.

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O Ram, *Thou art mighty* beyond calculation. Thou art wise beyond measure. Thou art good beyond comprehension. Thou art love beyond all bounds. Thou art light beyond all lights. Thou art bliss beyond all emotions. Such a Supreme being has assumed the form of the whole universe and is ever flooding it with His might, wisdom, goodness, love, light and bliss.

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Thou art eternal Brahman, sexless, desireless, unmoveable, unlimited, unchangeable. Thou art perfect knowledge, everlasting bliss, endless peace, all absorbing love. Thou art the all-pervading eternal witness. Thou art eternal freedom. Thou art nirguna, devoid of qualities. Thou art trigunatita. Thou art infinite shakti, power energy. Thou art the light of lights.

"Sword cannot pierce Thee.
Fire cannot burn Thee.
Water cannot wet Thee.
Air cannot dry Thee".

Thou art one imperishable Truth. Thou art the same in cold and heat, pain and pleasure, honour and dishonour. Thou art the same to friend and foe. Thou art above

good and evil, love and hate, success and failure. Thou art fearless, firm, all-powerful. Thou art one indivisible Brahman. Thou art formless, nameless, incomprehensible, unthinkable, indestructible. The sun, the moon, the planets, the stars, the worlds, the whole universe is Thy Divine manifestation. Thou art incomparable, inexhaustible, invincible, undefinable. Thou art beyond Sat and Asat, being and non-being. Thou art the sound Om. Thou art the supreme Lord of all gods, men, rakshasas, spirits, all creatures, all things, all beings, all, all.

Prostrations to Thee, O God of Gods!

(3) ALL IS RAM

The body is Ram, the mind is Ram, the atma is Ram; feeling is Ram, impulse is Ram, thought is Ram. Eyes see Ram, tongue tastes Ram, ear hears Ram, nose smells Ram, skin touches Ram. Sun is Ram, moon is Ram, stars are Ram, sky is Ram. Air is Ram, fire is Ram, water is Ram, earth is Ram. Man is Ram, woman is Ram, child is Ram, every creature is Ram, all things are Ram. There is nothing but Ram. Ram is Love, bliss, wisdom and eternal existence.

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The seer is Ram, seeing is Ram, the object seen is Ram; the knower is Ram, knowledge is Ram, the object known is Ram; actor is Ram, action is Ram, the acted upon is Ram, Ram is the sole doer. Ram has assumed the illusive forms of every being and every object in the universe. Surely Ram has manifested Himself in the form of the whole universe. Ramdas has surrendered himself to the will of Ram. Ramdas lives, moves and has his being in Ram. Ram lives, moves and has His being in Ramdas. Ramdas is another name for Ram. 'One' is the reality; 'two' is unreal. Das and Ram are one; therefore the combination, Ramdas, is equal to Ram. The eternal union of Ram and Das! The eternal oneness! This is the grandest truth.

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O Ram, you are saluting yourself, you are honouring yourself, you watch your own play. The mother feeds the baby; the mother is yourself, the baby is yourself, and over both, you yourself watch in silence.

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Rely only on Ram. Ram is the sole doer. He is the only sovereign Lord over all. He makes and unmakes things. He brings things into birth, protects them and destroys them. He is all in all.

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Ram is our mother, father, master, friend and all. He is our sole Lord. He is kind and loving. We are all His children, His servants. We do all things as He bids us do. We are only carrying out His behests. To realise this condition of things, we must be thoroughly pure and sinless. To become pure and sinless we must receive His grace. To get Ram's grace, we must pray to Him in full faith. Our heart-felt prayers are always heard. At times we may have to weep and cry bitterly to Him to remove our internal obstacles that prevent the acceptance of His grace.

Feel always that you are His child and servant and that He is both your mother and master at once. You are ever under His protection. Live secure, confident and happy. All conditions in which you are placed are good, since they are brought about by your loving mother and master. Every incident in your life has been beautifully arranged, planned and worked out by Him. Have no cares; do all things as commanded by Him. Your false responsibility must cease. A man who has surrendered himself to God is happy beyond measure, for he has found the fountain of eternal bliss within himself. Seek and find out this centre of bliss, Ram.

(4) RAM THE SOLE REFUGE OF BHAKTAS

O Ram, You are the *Sole Refuge of* all who always meditate upon you. You pervade all the worlds. You are all light, all love, all bliss. To engage the mind at all times on you is to attain perfect peace. To those *Bhaktas* who have surrendered themselves to you, you are all kindness, all love, all mercy, all forgiveness. When once your devotee lays himself in all humility at your feet, you are his sole guide, protector and giver of all joy. Such a bhakta is blessed indeed; for you manifest yourself in him, and, making him a mere instrument in your Divine hands, you yourself work through him, talk through him, think through him; your mighty power wields him, to fulfil your Divine purpose. Such a devotee is ever immersed in samadhi, i.e., in complete union with you; that again means that he is enjoying an everlasting bliss — unconditional, unlimited, imperishable bliss.

(5) MOTHER AND MASTER

Realise God as your Divine Mother.

Realise God as your supreme Lord and Master.

As a child of God, receive His unbounded love and ever-ready protection.

As a servant of God, be ever willing to obey His commands and serve Him in all humility and faith.

* * * *

Whenever you receive anything, it is the fond and loving mother, Ram, that gives it. Whenever you serve anybody, it is the kind and merciful master, Ram, that you serve. So you are to Ram both a child and a servant, and He is to you both a Mother and a Master.

(6) HIS INSCRUTABLE WAYS

Sriram's supreme will works beautifully through the Universe. *Ram's ways are so inscrutable* that it is utterly

useless to question the why and the wherefore of what Ram does. Ours is only to submit to His will, taking it all the time that Ram does everything always for the best. To keep up Ram's remembrance at all times without break or interruption is to submit to His will. It means self-surrender. Let all our thoughts, words and deeds emanate from Ram, ourselves having been offered, as mere instruments, to work out Ram's will. Let contentment and peace reign in us for ever and for ever. Let there be no doubts and misgivings. Let all our trust, all our faith, all our courage be in Sriram.

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God's purpose is hard to be gauged; therefore, *His ways are inscrutable* and incomprehensible. The more God mystifies, the more He attracts. The whole charm of it lies here. In these circumstances we have only to submit to Him completely and take that everything He does in our case is for our good. Full reliance on Him is strength and peace. O man, don't misunderstand God. He means always well. It is our attitude of mind towards what He does that makes us miserable or happy. Let full faith in Him be ours, and the rest He will take care of Himself.

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Ram works through the universe in *His own inscrutable ways.*. No two men in this world are of the same nature. He has given each one his individual nature. Nature or swabhava is the accumulated result of karmas performed in previous lives. In this variety of swabhava lies the lila of God. He works through each individual according to his own nature. If all were of the same nature the lila would cease to exist.

(7) RAM KNOCKED AT THE PORTALS OF THE MIND

All hail, O Ram! What a glorious night! What a grand experience! Ram knocked at the portals of the

mind. Wake up, says Ram. Ramdas wakes up. And in the dazzling light of Ram the darkness of the mind fled and the bright flash of light illumined all. Ramdas basks in the brilliant rays of Ram in supreme joy.

(8) RAMDAS, WHO ARE YOU ?

Ramdas, who are you?

You are not a man, nor a woman, nor beast, nor bird, nor plant, nor earth, nor any other object that is seen or can be conceived of. You are the eternally free, the nameless, the formless one, the ever-existent Love itself, Bliss itself, the one sole Reality, the one deathless Existence.

(9) LOVE RAM

Love Ram with all your heart; give up all other thought; let the mind get merged in the one Love for Ram. Then behold the whole universe as the form or manifestation of Ram. You are now automatically, as a natural consequence, made to love all beings and things that make up this universe, with equal intensity. You then gain equal vision. In this Divine vision of love, attain eternal bliss. Then you are always absorbed in an ocean of love, which is after all another name of bliss. The first thing to do is to love Ram, love Him beyond all other objects and things. The sign of Love for Ram is that you remember Him at all times until you are completely lost in Him, until you become one with Him, until your individuality is merged in the Divinity of Ram. In this condition, friend and foe, good and evil, pain and pleasure, do not affect you adversely. You stand above the contact of these reflections. You are free, free, free. Then you love all, i.e., you love none. You possess everything, i.e., you possess nothing. You have realised Truth and have attained it.

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Give up everything, sacrifice everything, forsake everything, abandon everything, for the sweet, nectar-

like love of Ram. It is so precious, it is so mighty, it is so blissful. O Ramdas, swim in it, dance in it, be thoroughly mad with it. There is no gain higher than this love; no achievement greater than this love; no attainment more desirable than this love. Therefore, Ramdas, live for ever and for ever in the ecstasy of this maddening love.

(10) SEE RAM EVERYWHERE

To realise God is to *see Ram everywhere,* in all things, in all beings, in all feelings, in all thoughts, in all actions, in all impulses. The mind itself is Ram, the body is Ram; the Atma is Ram, the ten senses are Ram; the twenty-four tatwas are Ram. All, all is Ram, Good and bad, heat and cold, joy and sorrow, love and hate — all, all is Ram. Man, woman, beast, bird, tree, hill, stars, moon, sun, earth, the tiniest particle of dust, animal, plant — all, all is Ram. Be sinless, be pure, be holy, be peaceful; be truth, love, light and bliss. Be intoxicated with Ram; nay, mad with Ram. And this is the supreme Wisdom and Truth. Live in God. Live in God.

(11) PRAY, TO REALISE HIS PRESENCE

We need not pray to God to show Himself to us in any particular form; because, the whole universe we behold before, around, above and below us is one grand form of Ram. Let us *pray to Him to make us realise His presence* in the world we see around us, in all beings, in all things. Let every object we behold remind us immediately of the all-pervading, ever-existent and all-loving Ram. Reaching this height of realisation or God-vision, how blissful it will make us to move and live in the midst of the world, which can then affect us as nothing else but Ram in His varied, picturesque manifestation! We are then enabled to love all alike, to look upon every being and object with reverence and love. In this state of realisation we create an all-flooding ocean of bliss, in

which we swim for ever and for ever. Ram, you are really grand! Ram! Ram! Blessed is the sight that sees Ram everywhere! All glory to you! O Ram! O Ram! All hail! All hail!

(12) GOD REALISATION

When the fond mother embraces her new born baby, for the time being her identification with the baby is so complete that she feels practically one with it, so much so that the sense of separation due to the bodies is entirely annihilated. In this realisation of oneness, the mother experiences the highest bliss. Here reigns love supreme. It does not ask for anything. The highest enjoyment is here felt as an intoxicating peace, in which personalities are totally lost. God-realized men are in similar condition with the whole universe which is the form of God itself. This feeling or experience of love towards, or oneness with, all beings, creatures and things is realisation. To deny the self or the ego, to own nothing, to acknowledge the will of God as the only reality — in brief, to rise above the consciousness of the body, in the continued contemplation of the one Divinity, informing everything, residing and pervading everywhere, is to realise God.

(13) NAME

O Ram! How can Ramdas describe the wonderful greatness of Thy glorious name? To repeat constantly Thy name means—

1. To realise that Thou are the only truth and that this apparent jagat is only Thy impermanent manifestation.

2. To realise Thy Divine presence in all things and beings. Thou art the infinite Power that has assumed the varied form of the universe.

3. To realise that Thou art the sole doer. Seated as Thou art in the hearts of all beings and things,

Thou actest and workest in Thy inscrutable ways to fulfil Thy Divine purpose. Truly Thy will alone is real and supreme.

4. To be always immersed in a sea of perfect bliss and peace.
5. To offer oneself as a willing instrument in Thy hands and remain ever free.

* * * *

Thy glorious name is sweetness itself, bliss itself, truth itself, love itself, knowledge itself, light itself — imperishable, above and beyond everything. Thy name is the end and goal of all desires; it is the source of all happiness, the end and aim of all existence. There is nothing like it. O that nectarlike name — how sweet! The moment it is uttered, the moment it is thought of, the moment it is remembered, all sense of duality is lost, all sense of separateness is gone, and the body consciousness vanishes. The mind is stilled to rest. Peace is gained, peace that brings pure anandam, pure bliss. What a powerful name is Ram! How wonderful is its potency! It makes one mad of Thee, and in that intoxication, Thy radiant light is seen to spread and envelop everything. All darkness is gone, all ignorance is driven away, all pain and evil eradicated. What a marvellous name! It is the one prop, one boat, one plank. Clinging to it firmly, in all faith, in all determination, without letting it go, under any conditions, takes one across the shoals, whirlpools, tempests and dangers of the wide and perilous ocean of this transient and unreal world. What a grand name is Thine!

The name 'Ram' is a nectarine pill. Keep it always on your tongue and be drinking, for ever and for ever, a continuous stream of bliss issuing from it.

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How powerful is Thy name, O Ram! The mere repetition of Thy name destroys all ignorance, all desires.

Thy glorious name pierces through maya and brings Thy happy devotee directly into Thy presence. The mere sound of Thy name drives away all disturbing thoughts. It works like a magic on the fickle and roaming mind. After setting the mind at rest it fills it with blissful nectar. Peace, peace, peace ever reigns where Thy glorious name is chanted. O! the charm of that beautiful and sweet name! All pain is transmuted into pleasure. The name robs the discordant sound of its harshness and turns it into melodious music. It transforms the ugliest sight into a beautiful appearance. It turns an arid desert into a fertile place. The Divine name changes hate into love, evil into good. O! the charm of that name! It brings light where there is darkness, happiness where there is misery, contentment where there is dissatisfaction, bliss where there is pain, order where there is chaos, life where there is death, heaven where there is hell, God where there is maya. He who takes refuge in that glorious name, knows no pain, no sorrow, no care, no misery. He lives in perfect peace.

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Ram's name is most wonderful; its power is unlimited. Thorough faith in that name means freedom from all sin, doubt, and pain. When you have that name in your thoughts or on your lips, where is there any fear for you? By the power of that name what can you not do? By taking refuge in that supreme Being, bearing that great name, you can work wonders. You can keep your body, senses and mind completely under subjection. Only have unshakable faith in that name. It uplifts you from a state of misery, restlessness and doubt, to one of unending bliss, perfect peace, fearless assurance. You can cling to Ram only by throwing up everything, making Ram your end, aim, ambition, goal, destination, your all in all. No looking back! Go ahead! Sweep the past into oblivion and have no thought of the future. Only live in the present, in Ram, for ever and ever.

The easiest method of concentrating the mind is to repeat constantly the sweet, glorious and Divine name of Ram.

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To control the mind there is no method, no sadhana, so effective and easy as to repeat your glorious name, O Ram! To repeat your sweet name means to still the disturbed mind, and plunge it into the ocean of bliss.

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You may remain in the very thick of the battle of life; still you can control your mind and senses, and keep the former firmly fixed on Ram, provided you keep on remembering or repeating His Divine name mentally or by mouth. Therefore wear always the irresistible armour of Ram's name and you may defy the enticing attacks of maya. You can then easily counteract the antagonism round about you by spreading a sweet influence of love and peace around you, which will make you look upon all as Ram who is all light, all love, all bliss. The terrible aspect of maya will then disappear, pain will cease and Ram's glory will be visible everywhere. No situation will then give you anything but pure anandam.

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Success indeed is to him who repeats Thy sacred, sweet and powerful name. Because it drives away darkness and establishes Light. It drives away misery and establishes Bliss; it drives away ignorance and establishes Wisdom; it drives away restlessness and establishes Peace; it drives away untruth and establishes Truth. Therefore Thy name is Jai Ram. It is indissolubly bound up with success.

(14) FOR A SADHAKA

The sadhaka who wants to attain God must strictly observe the following rules. He must observe them, not

as though he is bound by them, but impelled to abide by them under the command of the infinite power — Ram — that resides in him and everywhere around and about him.

1. The sadhaka should live upon satwic food, free from hot, pungent or bitter things and condiments. Milk and fruits are the best diet. The food must be moderate in quantity.
2. He must take very light food in the evenings.
3. The sadhaka must have only moderate sleep.
4. He must never sleep in the afternoon or during day.
5. He must talk very little.
6. He must avoid talking about personalities.
7. He must never criticise anybody, neither should he encourage others in this pernicious practice, which is very common in the world.
8. He should avoid talking about himself.
9. He must never enter into any controversy or discussion.
10. He should not repeat conversations unless called upon to do so, or except when it is found to be absolutely necessary.
11. He must keep the vow of brahmacharya. He must look upon all women either as mothers or manifestations of the Divine Being.
12. He must avoid worldly associations.
13. He must spend his time mostly in solitude.
14. He must never forget Ram.
15. He must always, when awake — except when talking or reading about Ram — be repeating Ram's name mentally or by mouth.

16. He should not engage himself in any talk or reading, which does not pertain to the ideal, Ram, which is his sole aim and goal in life.
17. He must without fail utilize the early hours of the morning, and also the evening hours, for prayers and meditation.
18. He must crush out all desires.
19. No doubts of any kind must be allowed to dwell in his mind.
20. His mind must accept only pure and holy thoughts. No unclean, impure, impious thoughts should ever be allowed to dwell in, or even enter, the mind.
21. He must be friendly and loving to all.
22. He must never expect to be treated by anybody with any kind of respect.
23. He must look upon the whole world as the manifestation of Ram, and all beings and things as forms assumed by Ram in order to play out his Divine lila.
24. He must offer himself now and again, in word, deed and thought, to Almighty Ram. He must lay himself — body, mind, buddhi and atma — at the feet of the all-loving Ram.
25. Gradually he must submit his will to the Divine will and thus give up his egoism, and then find peace and bliss in the realisation of his oneness with Ram.
26. He must constantly pray to God to enable him to observe these rules in such a way that he should do so without feeling himself in any way bound by them.

* * * *

Take heart, give up all care and sorrow, prostrate yourself at the holy feet of Ram, who is Love itself, Light itself, Bliss itself. Repeat the sweet name, Ram,

constantly. Dedicate your thoughts, words and actions to Ram. Resign your will to Ram's will. Live contented, in peace and bliss. Pray for Ram's help to follow the twelve rules given below:—

1. Meditate always on Ram who is the eternal Truth, a fountain of Love, the all-pervading Light, an ocean of Bliss.
2. Let no thought of evil, or of criticism about anybody, enter the mind.
3. Give up selfishness.
4. Be doing good to others without desiring for fruit.
5. Be content with what Ram has given you; don't crave for things you do not possess.
6. Don't feel disturbed if anything is taken away from you, or if anything is lost out of what you have.
7. Let all desires of the senses be kept under check.
8. Depend upon Ram. Let the realisation of Ram be the aim of life. Let all actions be performed in Ram's name, for Ram's sake. This will free you from all fear and sorrow.
9. Don't ruminate over the past. All that happened in the past has been for good. So no thought need be taken of it. Have no thought or anxiety about the future. What is to happen does come to pass in spite of yourself. Be prepared to face any and every condition calmly and coolly. The past, the future and the present are in the hands of Ram. No worry or anxiety can change the course of things as set. And in the present, think only of Ram, in all your doings, i.e., perform all actions as offerings to Him.
10. The goal is to surrender your will to Ram. Make Ram's will your will.
11. Give up ahankar.
12. Love all alike.

The sadhaka who would advance in bhakti must talk very little about himself; he must never encourage any talk which tends to his praise; and as for himself, he must never indulge in self-praise. He must give up all show of piety. He must never join in the criticism of others. He must never criticise anybody. His sole concern is to meditate upon Ram, to constantly utter or mentally repeat His sweet name, to read or listen to the reading of, religious works and lives of saints, and to talk, or join in the talk, about God's greatness and the ways of bhakti and jnana. The sadhaka must remain always pure in heart, word and deed. He must never be idle or sleepy. He must make it a rule to devote the early hours of the morning to the meditation of Ram. He must free himself from all attachments; no desire however trifling should disturb his mind. He must attempt to remain always unconscious of his body and its wants. He must take what is offered and be satisfied, and never crave for things which are not given him. He must now and again go into solitude or retreat, either near the riverside, sea-shore, a hill or a grove of trees. He must bathe in cold water as often as he thinks necessary. When a fit of laziness is coming on him, he must either take a dip in cold water in a tank, or walk out briskly towards a hill top, or on a level road for about two or three miles. He must never dissociate his mind from the thought of Ram. He must practise sensing all objects and beings about him as the manifestation of Ram. He must look upon all beings in this light and thus rise above all pairs of opposites — like and dislike, love and hate, good and bad, painful and pleasant, etc. He must sleep only as much as is absolutely necessary. He must not court respect. He must totally give up all desire for fame and name. He must always speak truth. He must talk very little about other matters; in fact he must avoid all talk except about Ram.

   

Never speak, or encourage talk, about yourself. Avoid personal references. Speak always of Ram — His glories, His love, His power, His peace.

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Too much sleep is the sole cause of the mind wavering.

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In the matter of food, the best diet for a sadhaka is fruits and milk, twice or thrice a day.

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Never court the society of worldly-minded men; never listen to worldly talk; never live in worldly surroundings.

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Never be led away by the opinion of others. Always listen to the inner voice and then act. Don't think of forms, appearances and objects; let no considerations or memories of the past worry you; let no expectations of the future engage your mind. Live always in present, in harmony with God, that is to say, in harmony with all. Live in peace and quiet. Ram is your sole guide and prompter.

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A lump of dry clay when immersed in water absorbs water, whereas a solid stone does not. So, when a sadhaka, without sufficient control over his senses, mixes freely in the world, he is liable to be dragged down into the turmoils of the world, but a yogi who has mastered his desires has no such fear.

(15) MAYA

Ignorance or delusion, i.e., maya, sets us on the belief that this body of ours is real and makes us forget the all-pervading Divine being who is the one and only reality. Living in this ignorance, our sole outlook on life becomes one continued service of this inconstant, unreal and

perishable body. Our concern then is always to find ways and means as to how best to nourish and protect this body. What best food should be given to it? What clothing should this body wear? What ornaments should adorn it? What must be put on the head, what on the feet, what must be used to cover the legs, what to dress the body with, and what rings, what bangles, what necklaces, what jewellery should it be decked with? These are the things in which we engage ourselves. The body demands fine and luxurious food to eat, rich clothing to wear, a soft bed to lie upon and brilliant ornaments to adorn itself with. It calls for fine music for the ears, sensuous sights for the eyes, sweet aroma for the nose. O! the delusion of this body! We fidget about the whole day and night in pursuit of the requirements of this transient body. It wants a spacious, decorated, well-furnished house to live in. It wants so many things and beings to satisfy its momentary pleasures. We are every minute engaged in this mad rush of satisfying the cravings of the body; and the mind and the senses are in their full play, making havoc of our lives. In our blind pursuit we hate and get angry with our brethren, and snatch ruthlessly from them, and secure for ourselves, what our mind has set itself upon, as our want. After all, to what purpose? For a momentary gain, for a passing happiness. In this struggle, what do we experience? Misery, pain, disappointment, anxiety, care, disease and ultimate destruction.

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The all-loving, all-blissful Reality — Ram — is entirely forgotten. We forget the fact that we come alone, naked into the world, and leave it at the end in the same condition. The hoarded wealth, the loved relations, the cherished fame, the vast property, the gold we value so much, all, all we leave behind, and carry with us only a load of sin which we gather in the course of our strife and struggle to amass these worldly baubles. O! vain life, O! vain world, how attractive are thy wiles! The

maya is such — ignorance is such! Instead of being the servant of the all-powerful, ever-existing and all-loving Ram, we become slaves of our bodies, senses and the mind. O Ram, how wonderful is the illusion in which Thou keepest us all! By Thy grace alone, can we free ourselves from it. O Ram, have pity on us and liberate us and take us on to your holy feet.

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The world is simply a vanishing play of the three gunas — satwa, rajas and tamas. All forms are merely the result of the gunas. Therefore, we should never associate ourselves with these gunas and the appearances caused by them. But who has assumed these forms and the gunas that are mayavic or illusive? It is the one supreme, imperishable Being, the only Reality. Therefore, let the forms and gunas produce on us no impression whatsoever, except that of merely reminding us of the Reality that appears to us as these forms controlled by the gunas. Diversity is false. Unity or oneness is Truth. Let our mind be always fixed on Truth — the only Truth. Let the mind be never allowed to dwell upon objects or forms. Let the mind be not engaged in judging or criticising things and forms. In order to stop the wandering of the mind that runs away to think upon various objects which as different entities are all unreal and therefore disturbing, we must develop the practice of immediately associating the thought of the Reality with the thought of the object, whatever it may be. If you go on having this practice, the diversity gets merged into the real unity. Maya gets absorbed in the Brahman. The turmoil of the mind is gone, and, in its place, settle down, the everlasting peace and bliss, because the Reality itself denotes, and is, peace and bliss.

(16) THE WORLD

Beware of the world, O sanyasin! The world is a powerful magnet; it draws you into itself unconsciously.

If you get into it you are lost in the whirlpool. Remain unattached like a lotus leaf in water.

Make your mind firmly fixed on Ram, and then move in the world. The allurements of the world do not then unsettle your mind. Move like the hurricane lantern which preserves its light unshaken amidst the heaviest blast of wind.

The world is a whirlpool; go into it only when the call is from Ram. Go only to strew peace and love around you. Do not condemn. Do not find fault. Love, love all alike. Give kindness and receive kindness. Let flattery and abuse be the same to you; sorrow and joy, the same to you. Keep your equilibrium, by unbroken meditation on Ram. Be fearless. Ram is in you — the Mighty and Powerful Being. He controls you. He guides you. He leads you. He is wise, gentle and loving. He does everything for the best. Submit to Him and live in Him. Unity is life; it is love. Diversity is death; it is hate. See Unity everywhere; 'one' only is real. He is Ram who pervades everywhere. Don't be influenced by forms. Don't be moved by any sight. Be self-poised and firm-set. Don't waver. Don't yield to doubt. Act with firmness and promptitude. The inner voice of Ram always guides you. Don't be guided by counsels for your welfare or comforts. Be humble, be ready to serve. Be all love. Sacrifice everything for the sake of Ram. Rise above all temptations. Break down all barriers that make for separation. Live a simple, pure and chaste life. This is all possible, if you put all trust in Ram and consecrate your all to Him. Self-surrender is what is required. Give up egoism. Be free, free from all conventions, from all formalities, from all castes and rules and restrictions, from all relationships, from all bonds and limitations. Breathe always the unfettered air of freedom, and live in Ram.

(17) YOUR QUEST

What is your quest? Peace and bliss.

God is eternal peace and bliss. Think of Him;

meditate on him; surrender yourself to Him; and you will realise Him within your own heart; there you will attain everlasting peace and bliss. Seek not this peace and bliss in the objects of the senses; if you do, you will only be inviting care and pain and misery.

Your happiness or misery depends upon yourself, upon the state of your mind, and not upon your external conditions or circumstances. When your mind, impelled by desires, is flitting from object to object, craving for possession and enjoyment, it lives in a state of restlessness which itself is misery. After possession of the object, come cares and anxieties; after its loss, follow grief and pain. The small amount of happiness you derive here is like a tiny flickering light in a thick, vast mass of darkness; it dies out in a moment, only to envelop you in a worse enthralling gloom. Know this, that the object you crave for is perishable and transient in itself. How then can lasting peace be derived from it? Hence, when the mind wanders in the midst of this ever-changing, impermanent medley of forms and things, it experiences nothing but pain and sorrow. Now then, direct your vision inward and behold God within, that eternal seat of all peace and bliss. Stop all the desultory activities of the mind and concentrate it upon Him. There you attain peace and bliss that never fade. Reach Him through love. He is at once peace, bliss and love. Love Him with all your heart and soul, and thereby direct your otherwise restless mind to him. As it wavers, rein it in and firmly fix it on him. Let all your emotions be worked up, to attain Him. Plead, pray, appeal, cry and weep and finally surrender yourself to Him, until you become one with Him, until you realise Him. He is eternal, all-powerful, all-knowing Truth. To realise Him is to become immortal, i.e., not only to enjoy immortal bliss and peace but also immortal power and knowledge. That is your goal. Then you will discover that the whole universe you see about is only the manifestation of the grand Truth you have realised within yourself.

If you get into it you are lost in the whirlpool. Remain unattached like a lotus leaf in water.

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Through love you then reach all and become one with, or, in tune with, the universe. Your life is now blessed indeed! You swim in the very ocean of peace and joy. You live, move and have your being in God. Sin cannot touch you, pain cannot affect you, no outward condition or circumstance can ruffle you. Your knowledge (really ignorance) that you are the body has vanished. You are the immortal soul, ever free, ever blissful and free from all the pairs of opposites and three qualities and free from all passions. Divine knowledge hath now rent asunder the veil of ignorance that hitherto clouded your soul. You are ever free — free, eternal God.

(18) RIGHT PATH

What is the right path?

It is the path of self-suffering, self-mortification, self-sacrifice and finally self-surrender that leads the devotee to the highest goal, God — Love — Ram.

While on the path, tread upon the thorns bravely; jump over the obstacles fearlessly; overcome all obstructions boldly; face dangers courageously; march onward and faint not — "stop not till the goal is reached".

Give up the ego, crush it out, and go forward to embrace the Lord Ram. The ego sets up the thorns, the obstacles, the obstructions and the dangers along the path. With the Lord's help fight out this ego, and come out victorious; then unending, uninterrupted bliss and freedom are thine.

(19) BRAHMACHARYA

Absolute brahmacharya is the only means to realise Brahman. Brahmacharya should be observed in thought, word and deed. The activities of the whole life should be adjusted and moulded to fulfil, in its completeness and perfection, this vow of brahmacharya. The idea of sex should be entirely obliterated from the mind. Brahman is sexless, desireless; Brahman is infinite shakti. Brahman

is eternal Truth, perfect knowledge and immortal Bliss. Brahman is one without a second. Brahman is the universe and beyond. Brahman is changeless and formless. Brahman is all. Therefore, O brahmachari! rise above the three gunas and dwandwas; be trigunatita, be dwandwatita and be ever merged in the ocean of infinite shakti, sat — chit — anand.

Brahmacharya gives you brahma tejas. This resplendent Light of Knowledge, Bliss and Power, alone can make you a fit instrument for working out the great purposes of Brahman. Then it is that you realise that you are Brahman Himself or itself. The infinite Power, Bliss and Knowledge is yourself. Let your thought, let your words, let your energy, flow directly from that glorious fountain-head Brahman. Then you are the knower of Brahman. Then you are Brahman.

The true Brahmachari thus attains the transcendent goal.

Absolute brahmacharya or continence is essential for spiritual advancement. The sex idea must be obliterated from the mind, or all women must be looked upon as mothers, the manifestation of the Divine Sita, the female aspect of Ram, the supreme Lord. An aspirant who has dedicated his life to the service of the Lord must not move too intimately in society until this ideal is firmly fixed in his mind. His faith and dependence upon Ram should be so strong and one-pointed that he should be perfectly impervious to the influences of "kama and kanchana". Surrender to God is the only course.

(20) YOGA

Yoga is union with Ram. The highest yoga is bhakti yoga or adhyatma yoga. Here the yogi realises the whole universe as the Divine manifestation of Ram — all creatures, men, objects and things in it being taken as the mayavic or illusive forms assumed by Ram; even the sensations, feelings, thoughts, impulses, actions and words

are taken as the expression of Ram — Ram pervading, informing, permeating everything conceivable and inconceivable. When this supremely grand yoga is attained, the sense of form and name is lost to the yogi. Now everything affects him only as Ram, since Ram absorbs and envelops all. The unity or oneness is thoroughly realised by the yogi. He is firmly fixed in yoga; his very cognizance of the world and its objects leaves upon him no impression other than that of Ram, with the result that he is unshakably enthroned in peace or samadhi. Now nothing can shake or disturb him; under all conditions, which, to him, are themselves the expression of Ram, he remains unmoved and perfectly at poise. He is veritably immersed in an ocean of everlasting bliss. He then looks upon the world and all that it contains, appearing in such a variety of forms and shapes, as the illusive panorama of Ram's Divine play or lila. He moves, talks, works in the midst of it all, keeping himself always unattached to the unreal manifestation of Ram, but diffusing peace and bliss wherever he goes or stays. Nothing daunts him. Terrors of the world, controlled by the three states of birth, growth, and death, and the three gunas, viz., satwa, rajas and tamas, do not in the least affect him as such but only as Ram, who is peace itself, bliss itself, knowledge itself, love itself and the great Truth, the only Truth. Prahlad attained this state to such a degree, that fire could not burn him; it acted on him only as Ram, i.e., peace; so also could water not touch him, nor did the fall from a precipice affect him. "Fire cannot burn him, sword cannot cut him, water cannot wet him, air cannot dry him." This state he reached by the mere repetition of the Divine name of Ram, giving up everything for that one purpose. First the repetition of Ram's name; then the realisation of his presence in all things and beings; lastly the state of samadhi, in which names and forms are dropped — a state of bliss and peace — and the Eternal is attained.

(21) KARMA-YOGA

Do all actions in a state of complete surrender to Ram. Then you are totally free from all their after-effects. You perform them impersonally. This is true karma-yoga.

(22) BHAKTI

The path of bhakti is the highest path that leads the devotee to the blessed feet of Ram. The devotee loves Ram, as the child its mother, as the servant his master, with complete dependence upon Him. He opens out his heart fully before Ram, lays it quite bare, confesses all his short-comings and weaknesses, and appeals for strength to conquer them; in fact he lays the whole responsibility upon Ram, for eradicating all the evils that exist in him, that prove as obstacles in the way of his complete self-surrender to Ram. Weaknesses are destroyed the moment the self-surrender is complete; but the self-surrender should not be only for a time; it must be continuous, and the consciousness of the ego must leave the devotee entirely and for ever. The moment there is a lapse in self-surrender, the ego returns, and along with it all the weaknesses that disappeared for a time. In order that the self-surrender may be complete and at the same time continuous without a break, the smarana or remembrance of Ram must never cease, not even for a single moment. It must flow ceaselessly, continuously, until it is fixed once for all, when nothing could move it from its place. The best means of keeping up Ram's smarana is to repeat Ram's name, loudly or slowly or mentally.

To increase bhakti, three things are necessary:—

1. Constant repetition of Ram's name.
2. To see Ram in all objects and beings.
3. To undergo all difficulties and sorrows in a spirit of resignation and renunciation.

(23) STEPS THAT LEAD TO SURRENDER

1. Acknowledgment of God's will as supreme.

Our ego refuses to submit to this truth and makes us suffer from disappointments and doubts. The ego can be put down only by a continuous remembrance that God is the sole doer and that we are all merely instruments in His hands. As we fix more and more firmly in the mind the habit of remembering Him, the ego gets thinner and thinner until it is entirely obliterated or wiped out, which means that the state of samadhi has been reached.

2. Realisation that God is always good and loving.

So, His will works only for good. He is incapable of doing any harm or evil, as by nature He is good and good alone. This gives us the necessary strength to patiently endure every trial and grief, seeing in it the hidden good, as in the apparent harsh treatment of the child by its mother when she chastises her child for its good.

3. Acceptance of the fact that God has assumed the form of the universe, of all creatures, of all beings and things in it.

We start by taking God as love. So God is good. Therefore there is no evil at all in the world. Then, every being and every thing is only the manifestation of a good and loving God. So all creatures, all beings, deserve our respect and love. We have nothing to dislike or hate. Here we create an ocean of love in which we immerse ourselves, and enjoy eternal bliss. Now the self-surrender is complete; the mind is thoroughly pure and perfectly innocent. The blessed devotee who has attained this stage is ever in samadhi in all conditions of his existence.

(24) TWO KINDS OF SAMADHI

One kind of samadhi consists in sitting down in a definite posture and, by meditation, merging oneself in the Infinite, entirely forgetful of the world outside.

But one should not be satisfied merely by attaining the condition for oneself. One must impart the knowledge of it to humanity. This, one can do by moving in the world, realising it to be the lila of God — in which all things and creatures are only forms assumed by God for His world-play, the whole of which is inconsistent and unreal. This realisation which occurs when the ego is entirely obliterated constitutes the state of the other kind of samadhi.

The former one is necessary for attaining this one. Realise God as love and the universe as God. Realise God both with form and without form and with and without attributes. Formless God without attributes is inexpressible. Formless God with attributes is Love, Light, Bliss, Truth, Wisdom and Consciousness. God with form is the universe and all in it.

(25) SURRENDER

The path of self-surrender is the most natural and the easiest path. Offer up everything to Ram. Lay your whole existence as a complete and unqualified offering at the holy feet of Ram. Behold the whole universe as the manifestation of Ram. Rejoice in seeing the worlds since they all remind you of Ram. Ram is light, love and bliss. You have nothing to condemn. The world is the lila of Ram. Ram is playing in it by assuming various forms. Observe the play and remain always peaceful and full of bliss.

Offer up everything to Ram, your actions, words and thoughts, your body, mind and soul. Remember God at all times. He will then give you peace. Let all desires vanish in Ram. Let all the so-called evil disappear in Ram. Let all thoughts rest in Ram. Be absorbed and merged in Ram. Be mad with Ram. Be intoxicated with Ram. Then you have all that you have wanted. You have realised Ram, you have reached Truth, you have attained peace.

No bewilderment, no doubt, no struggle, when one has handed oneself completely into the hands of God. Live a life in complete submission to Ram, and you have no anxieties, no cares, no sorrows, no confusion. Do not mind what people say of you. Remain firm in your faith in Ram, in praise and ignominy alike. Do not condemn anything; seek no advice; don't be led away; exercise your own will, i.e., the will of Ram. Don't dwell upon personalities; all forms are unreal; all opinions are nothing to you; cling to Truth, Peace, Love, Light, Bliss. Have no misgivings. Be peaceful, contended and blissful. Ram is the only Reality. Meditate on Ram, always. See only Him everywhere. Ram, Ram. Om Sriram.

(26) JIVAN-MUKTA

Jivan-Mukta is he who has totally surrendered himself to God, so much so, that God alone works through him, his individual ego having been conquered. He then lives always in God, and God lives in Him. He craves for no fame, no wealth, no earthly pleasures of any kind. In the inner consciousness of his being he finds the source of all bliss, and so lives contented under all conditions; no change of any kind in his life disturbs the equal tenor of his mind. He remains under all conditions at peace with himself. Nothing daunts him. If he undertakes any work, it is always without any selfish motive; and no threat of pain or even death will prevent him from the performance of such work, since he takes it that the work is enjoined on him by God Himself. He may often have not even the feeling that God is working through him; but he does all work without the least sense of egoism. People in general will extol him at one time, and speak ill of him at another. He is bound by nobody's opinion. He is free — ever free. Om Sriram.

(27) REALISATION OF UNITY

Individuals are formed by their gunas — which are in their very nature diverse but all unreal. According to

his own gunas, man is propelled to action. The undying and birthless, that works through all, is God. To recognise this fact — and to live accordingly — is to ignore what is false and accept what is true. This can be reached only by realisation of Unity.

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It is the body-consciousness that is an obstacle to this realisation. Therefore, rise above all wants concerning the body. Make it a tool to serve the higher purpose. Destroy all the desires it has, by the help of the mighty will that is lodged in you and everywhere, which is after all one and the same. That will is Ram. Evil and good are only apparent. They form part of the illusion.

(28) LIVE THE REAL LIFE

It is not sufficient if you simply repeat the name of Ram, you must be also loving and kind to all. It will not do to call yourself a yogi if you do not love and treat kindly all alike and keep your mind always peaceful. It will not do to don the ochre-coloured robe, but you must also have love and kindness to offer to all alike, and be always peaceful. It will not do if you simply say your prayers regularly every day, you must also be kind and loving to all alike and be always cheerful. It will not do to speak of God and His love in eloquent terms, you must also bear Him ever in your bosom. It will not do merely to preach Truth and ethics, you must live a strictly moral life. No good of show. Live the real life, i.e., the life in God. That is the goal of all faiths, all practices, all religions. If that is not gained all efforts are fruitless.

(29) PREACHING AND PERSONAL EXPERIENCE

Before a man goes into the masses as a preacher he must first of all attain perfect purity. He must be pure in thought, word and deed. He must not only have

realised God but also have firm hold upon such realisation. He must expound the Truth from personal experience. Before he can be fit to impress the hearers, he must have the light of God issuing through his eyes, the bliss of God beaming on his face, the love of God flooding up in his heart. His very presence should create a holy and pure atmosphere around him. The halo of Divinity should always hover over him. His words should be gentle; indomitable strength and thorough fearlessness should be in his demeanour and his mind be unshakably fixed in peace. In this Divine state he must speak, act, move, and live. Om Sriram.

A preacher has no right to go out into the world to preach the highest Truth, i.e., peace, unless he has realised it himself. He should deliver himself of his own experiences, and not bookish knowledge which does not appeal to the hearers, nor impress itself upon them. Preaching without realisation is like dealing in second-hand articles. They never satisfy the receiver. Let the preacher's own experiences be held out like the dazzling coins fresh from the mint.

(30) WHAT DO THEY TEACH US ?

1. Mahatma Gandhi—
   Control of the palate, and therefore of all desires.
2. Sri Aurobindo—
   See Ram in all beings, things, actions, feelings and thoughts.
3. Gautama Buddha—
   Renunciation of all ties. Moral elevation — purity in thought, word and deed.
4. Saviour Jesus Christ—
   God is love — if we love each other, God dwelleth in us.

5. Sri Krishna—

"Abandoning all duties come to Me alone for shelter; grieve not, I shall liberate thee from all sins".

Surrender yourself to God and then perform actions without attachment. (Karma Yŏga.)

6. Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa—
"Give up kamini and kanchana".
Unity of religions.

7. Sri Krishna Chaitanya—
Reach God through intense love and faith.
Chant His Name and sing of His glories.

8. Swami Rama Tirtha—
Be always cheerful and feerless.

9. Swami Vivekananda—
Many-sided, clear and lucid view of the Infinite.
Bold and easy exposition of the Vedanta.

10. Sri Siddharudha Swami—
Look for the source of all bliss and peace, i.e., Divinity, in yourself.

Be like a child.

11. Sri Balakrishna—
Have unshakable faith in the name, Ram; it will bring you everlasting bliss.

12. Kollur Sadhumaharaj—
Talk only of Ram and His greatness.

13. Jagadguru Sri Ram—
"Ever remember Me; live, move and have your being in Me; I shall give you freedom and bliss".

14. Prophet Mahomed—
Self-surrender to Allah, the highest goal.

15. Mahabharata—

"He alone is Brahman in whom are found truthfulness, charity, forgiveness, good conduct, non-injury, penance and mercy".

(31) EXTREMES

1. A saint's heart is the hardest, but at the same time the softest.
2. The greatest anguish and the greatest pleasure are the same, in their effects.
3. The height of wisdom and the height of madness meet.
4. Emptiness is always full.
5. The weakest is the strongest, for example, a child.
6. The most dazzling light is pitch darkness to the eyes.
7. The most elevated position for man is the lowest situation.
8. The greatest love is synonymous with the greatest cruelty.
9. Simplicity is profundity.
10. Victory is defeat.
11. Virtue carried to extremes becomes vice.
12. Tears flow through happiness as well as sorrow.
13. The deepest pit produces the greatest height.
14. The longest length meets at a point.
15. The greatest speed is the condition of perfect rest.
16. The softest thing is the hardest to break.
17. The fairest object is the ugliest evil.
18. The highest mountain peak determines the lowest depth.
19. Courage springs from fear.
20. Perfect consciousness is perfect unconsciousness.

21. The loudest sound produces the same effect as perfect stillness.
22. A piece of ice and a red-hot cinder on hand produce similar sensation.
23. The bosom friend is a bosom enemy and *vice versa.*
24. The most valued diamond is worthless carbon.
25. The greatest honour is tantamount to the greatest disgrace.
26. The dearest object causes the greatest pain.
27. The richest is always the poorest, and the poorest is the richest.
28. The humblest is most conscious of his worth.

* * * *

Death is life.

Birth is destruction.

Annihilation is existence.

Harmony is chaos.

Being is non-being.

Ram, Ram, Ram, is above all these.

* * * *

Every visit of death makes you think of a deathless state.

Every pang of pain wakes you up to the state of endless bliss.

Every attack of anxiety reveals to you a state of everlasting peace.

Every sight of evil gives rise in you to a knowledge of absolute goodness.

Every feeling of weakness makes you conscious of inexhaustible strength.

Every touch of impurity reveals to you a state of perfect purity.

Every tie of bondage drives you to realise the state of eternal freedom.

Every blinding darkness opens up to you the outlook of a breakless day.

Every puzzling diversity reminds you of the all-comprehending unity.

Every sight of chaos takes you to the ideal of a perfect harmony.

Every experience of hatred draws you to the recognition of an eternal all-absorbing love.

Every scene of destruction strikes in you a faith in the existence imperishable.

(32) JOY

If pleasure be joy, let pain be also joy.
If getting be joy, let giving be also joy.
If action be joy, let inaction be also joy.
If thinking be joy, let non-thinking be also joy.
If talking be joy, let silence be also joy.
If sleeping be joy, let waking be also joy.
If health be joy, let ill-health be also joy.
If eating be joy, let fasting be also joy.
If living be joy, let dying be also joy.
Your are yourself pure unalloyed joy — bliss eternal.

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O joy, O happiness, O bliss, O ecstasy, O Ram! O Ramdas, swim, swim, eternally, in the sea of love that is spreading before, behind, above, below you. All forms, all things, speak aloud of the infinite love of Ram. All, all are He, all are Sriram, all are love. Dance, dance, O Ramdas, in ecstasy, in the madness of Ram's love, intoxicated with the delightful love of Ram.

(33) WOMAN

Woman is maya. Be a passionless, harmless child in the hands of maya. The whole game of the world is played by woman. She is at once the liberator and the enslaver of man. Give her the role of a liberator. As a liberator she acts as a mother, kind, careful and loving. As an enslaver she fools, teases and bewilders man.

(34) SOLITUDE

For a beginner in the practice of yoga, solitude is the best thing. Meditation on the Divine Self in a solitary place raises him to the higher levels of consciousness in which he remains merged in samadhi. Continued sadhana, in solitude, enables him to realise God.

(35) SILENCE

How cooling is silence! Talk is like the surging sea; silence is like the surface of still waters. Silence settles down the disturbed mind to its native calmness. Peace is silence, love is silence, the great Truth is silence. Silence is the cause of all birth. From silence evolves out the varied universe. Silence is the beginning and the end of all things. In the middle state it is all activity, noise, turmoil, and the mad rush. The resting snake runs and fidgets about, and then rests again. Where the river starts there is perfect stillness, the running water is active and noisy in its course, until it attains its calm again when it meets the ocean. The sleeping bird starts up early morning, flies about from tree to tree; when the evening comes it regains its nest and calm again. From silence all come, to silence all revert. All activity is rounded by silence.

(36) CONSISTENCY

Consistency is a mere word, which is not to be used in relation to a man's action when he is pursuing the great

principle, Truth. As the ways of God are inexplicable, so is the conduct of a man who struggles to know God. He sacrifices the hard-set consistency, when the principle of Truth is at stake.

(37) UNSHAKABLE FAITH

O man, don't be swayed or influenced by the opinions of others; stand firm upon the rock of your own convictions; that is, have unshakable faith in Ram who resides in you as well as everywhere in the universe about you. Let mountains roll down over you; let the sea rise in floods to swallow you up; let heavenly bodies thunder down to crush the earth on which you stand; let earth herself break up and be shattered to pieces beneath you; but you keep your faith in Ram firm, firm, ever firm. Shake off all bonds; stand alone, and view, as the eternal witness, the magnificent game, play or lila of Ram. O Mind, rise, rise from the "charnel pits" of a mundane existence, from the midst of the transient and petty things of the world; rise, rise to those glorious heights, where infinite peace and bliss reign supreme; mingle with that peace and bliss, and attain — realise — the eternal state, to which you have a birth-right. Let nothing short of this realisation be your end and aim in this existence; all else is fraught with pain and fear. O man, you are born to be blissful; the great reservoir of bliss is in you. Let it overflow and flood your whole being. Why play with bits of glass and be attached to them, when the brilliant diamond "Kohinoor" is within your reach? It is yours already; realise, realise that it is in you; you are that; you are not the perishable body; you are the infinite Spirit, the eternal Atman, full of bliss. O realise this. Om Sriram.

(38) PRIDE

Give up show of humility, but feel humble at heart and behave accordingly.

Pride about sadhanas is utterly useless. There is only one way to attain Ram, and that is complete self-surrender to Him. Then live in peace and joy.

That pride goes before a fall is a truism which must be for ever stamped on the mind of man. Never be proud of anything. When God does everything through you, who is it then that is proud? Do not exalt your self; do not expect praise or homage. You are always the servant and child of God. All credit, all praise, all exaltation, all glory, is to the Lord. Be humble, be self-denying, be ready to serve, be a true and faithful servant of God. Do only such things as would tend to your continuous remembrance of God, who is Love, who is truth.

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If we want to augment our bhakti for Sriram, we must not own anything in the world. We must give up our egoism entirely. We must never consider that our actions are our own. Ram is the sole doer. We have therefore no cause to take pride in what we do. Everything takes place only through Ram's grace. Our pride is false and ruinous. The respect we receive, the goodness and greatness of every kind that are in us, are due to the grace of Ram. Humility at all times, under all conditions should be our motto of life. We must not forget the fact that we are merely instruments in the hands of Ram who is all love.

(39) LOVE

God is love, Love all. What a grand privilege it is to love with a pure heart! Sanctify yourself with pure love, the supreme love. Let every nerve of yours thrill with the rhythm of love. Let every fibre of your being respond to the impulse of love Divine. Let the very blood in your veins run to the soft music of love. Let a halo of love surround your immortal existence. Let your very heart beat keeping time to the heavenly harmony of love.

Let your words drop like the soft and smooth pearls of love. Let your acts be the soothing blossoms of love. Let your thoughts be the ethereal light of the gem of love. Be in tune with love. Be merged in love. Be saturated with love. Let every atom of your frame vibrate and dance, and sing the song of love. Clasp the whole universe in one vast embrace of love.

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Let your life be sweetened with love or else it will be dry and tasteless. Let your heart beat the rhythm of love. Let your voice sing of love. Let your eyes see the vision of love. Let your ears hear the music of love. Let your tongue taste the nectar of love. Let your nose sense the perfume of love. Let your body enter into the noble service of love.

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Love sanctifies all. Love purifies all. Love ennobles all. Love enlightens all. Love pervades all. Love is God.

(40) FORMS AND FORMALITIES

Ram works through the universe according to His own supreme will. He works through all beings. Condemn systems, habits and institutions but never individuals. Pure love admits of no bondage to any set rules, regulations or customs. Stand above all those and live in Truth and Love. Anything that stands in the way of Truth must be brushed aside ruthlessly. Formalities must be trampled under foot when Truth or Love suffers. Formalities disappear when Truth steps in, in all majesty. Forms are all unreal. Don't believe in them; don't depend upon them. All opinions are trash. Rise above them all, and boldly follow Truth. To realise God as all-pervading and to know and practise this oneness and unity through all life and things in the world is to create harmony and peace. Stand alone and be a centre to radiate round you, peace, harmony and joy. This is possible only through realisation of the infinite love of Ram, of the complete

oneness of all things and beings. Diversity caused by the forms is utterly false. Relations, friends, wealth, name, fame are all unreal, false delusion. Give up all of them. The whole universe is only the false manifestation of one eternal Being or Non-Being called Truth or Love. Seek Him and Him only in all things, in all beings, everywhere.

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Castes, rules, regulations, customs, relations, possessions, and systems are all bondages. Break them off and be free. To be free is to attain God, because God is ever free.

(41) PERSONAL WANTS

Give up all longings. The most trifling desire pulls you down to your body consciousness and your samadhi is lost; mind becomes unsettled, and all sorts of thoughts of separateness get into the mind and work havoc there. Remain always indifferent to your personal wants. Remain merged always in Ram, the giver of supreme peace.

(42) CONTROL OF PASSIONS

When the worst passions are assailing you, associate them immediately with Ram, the giver of peace and bliss, and at once they fly away from you.

(43) A PEACEFUL MIND

The mind sees through the eyes, hears through the ears, smells through the nose, tastes through the tongue and feels the touch through the body. When the mind is restless, these senses make it perceive diversity which brings pain and sorrow. When the mind is peaceful, these senses make it perceive oneness which brings joy and bliss. A restless mind is maya. A peaceful mind is Ram. When the mind is filled with the one thought of peace or Ram, eyes see nothing but Ram, ears hear nothing but Ram, nose smells nothing but Ram, tongue tastes nothing

but Ram, every touch of the body is nothing but Ram. Every thing, every being, affects the mind through the senses as Ram who is eternal peace and bliss.

(44) FOR AN ASPIRANT

Be witness of your own struggle.

Look upon it calmly, cheerfully and fearlessly.

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Bear in mind that a Power at once omnipotent and loving is guiding you, controlling you and leading you on to Himself.

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When you speak, be precise and bold. Let your speech be a "thinking aloud". Be in tune with the Infinite whenever you speak. Put yourself in this state in all your actions, and words. Then you live in God.

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Let us submit ourselves to the guidance of Truth, the God within us. Truth is universal love. Suffer for His sake, i.e., for all. Then suffering becomes real joy. Selfishness is fraught with pain. Real joy is impersonal. Pleasure is selfish, personal.

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Don't do anything as duty. You are not bound even by duty. Do what God spontaneously makes you do. Remain unattached both to the action and its result.

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Never cringe, and never curry favour. Nobody is inferior to you. And you are inferior to nobody.

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Work silently. Avoid flattery and appreciation. Flattery is a great tempter, which brings about the fall of the struggling aspirant.

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Be independent, self-reliant, fearless, self-sacrificing. Love all alike.

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Be fearless and bold. Sacrifice anything and everything for the sake of Truth.

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Be independent; accept what is offered, as from Ram. Never be beholden or grateful to personalities. The giver is always Ram. Be, at all times, at ease; do not stand on ceremony. Do not be hypocritical and vain. None is superior to you, none inferior.

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Silence is better than useless talk. Keep to your principles of Truth firmly at the risk of your very life. No sacrifice is too great for attaining Truth.

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Be soft, tender, mild, loving, smiling, humble, calm, peaceful, patient, gentle. Keep to this state always, under all conditions.

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Give up wrath, arrogance, pride, hate, harshness, impatience, cruelty, hardness; never have anything to do with these, under any condition.

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Never talk or think ill of anybody, don't find fault with anybody. Don't condemn anything or anybody. Be simple, pure, holy, innocent and childlike.

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Every fall goes before a rise; fall only to rise. Learn the lesson in fall; become wise; remove defects and imperfections; rise up, pure and courageous.

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Control the stomach thoroughly, because it is the seat of all disorders, both of the body and the mind. Never

eat in large quantities anything which cannot be easily digested. Keep the stomach light.

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Perfect peace is attained when the mind is withdrawn from the objects of sense and freed entirely from all the inrush of thoughts and made to dwell upon the absolute Being, Ram, who is at once Truth, Knowledge and Bliss.

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O mind, dwell always on Ram; be permeated through with Ram. Fling away name, fame, wealth and all sense pleasures. Get concentrated entirely upon Ram. Be independent of all outside things. Be self-reliant, cheerful, loving, and fearless. Realise the infinite Ram.

(45) VARIOUS

The life of a saint or seeker after Truth is always apparently inconsistent and puzzling, but a man of insight can see that his goal is clear, that a glistening stream of selflessness and purity is ever running through all his activities. His goal is Unity, Truth, God.

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Our life is a continuous struggle to reach the Infinite. Our progress may be slow or rapid, conscious or unconscious, but we are all bound to that goal.

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God is infinite ocean of nectar-like bliss. Let us have an insatiable thirst for it; then, the more we drink of it, the more thirsty we become; we drink and drink until we are completely absorbed and lost in it. All identity is lost. The drinker and the drink become one.

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Every morning birds in their sweet charming notes are sending forth a warm tribute to the bounteous Deity, for the manifold gifts He is showering on us all, out of His unbounded love and kindness.

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Just as threads interwoven make the cloth, just as clay is shaped into various kinds of pots and gold is turned into different kinds of ornaments, so one God has manifested himself as the vast universe and all that it contains.

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When the mind is filled with the contemplation of God, thoughts may be entering it and be getting dissolved into it. This may occur now and again. The blank time that remains between the entrance of one thought and another is spent in a state of samadhi. It is then pure God-consciousness. The struggle consists in trying to remain always in this condition.

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The blueness of the sky is in yourself; when stricken with jaundice you see the same sky yellow. The sweetness of sugar is in yourself; when attacked by fever you feel the same sugar tasting bitter.

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Bondage is misery — Freedom is bliss.

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Every fall gives you more strength to stand on your own feet.

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Freedom is life. Bondage is death. To roam about, free like air, with the sweet name of Ram revolving in the mind, means full peace. Feel one with all that you see, with all thought merged in Ram. Mind entirely concentrated on that highest, most perfect Ideal, brings pure bliss.

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The maddest mind distils the purest wisdom.

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The difference between good and evil is only something that has an apparent existence for the self-deluded man. The conflict between them is only a necessary condition of the play.

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Desire for fame, wealth and woman deludes a man. To give up this desire, and move in the world unattached, loving all alike, treating all alike, casting all differences and all distinctions overboard — is to live in the Eternal. Forms, rules, restrictions — all dharmas have to be given up: and then to approach the Divine feet of Sriram is to bask in the full and glorious sunshine of Ram's grace. We have to conquer Prakriti, the triple aspects of nature, rise above them and live a life free, open and liberated.

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To constantly remember Ram is to rise above all temptations.

(46) THE END

Ram has triumphed. Truth must triumph. Das is permeated through and through by Ram. Ram is pervaded through and through by Das. The lover and the beloved have become one. Jiva has got merged in Shiva. Atma has been realised as Paramatma. The servant has become one with the master. The child has lost itself in the mother. The realisation of oneness is complete. What a consummation! Nothing higher remains to be attained. The halo of truth rests dazzling over all, and defies all. His golden touch has transmuted all into shining gold. O, what a grandeur! What magnificence! Unutterable bliss, ungazable brilliance, untastable sweetness! Because He is bliss — light — sweetness itself.

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Ram — Tat twam asi. That thou art. Thou art everything and every being. The world is unreal. Thou only art real. To remember you always is to see Thee.

Am I weak? Then let me realise inexhaustible strength, as I am ever guided, controlled and manipulated by an omnipotent Being.

Am I ignorant? Then let me realise the highest know-

ledge, as my intellect is always informed and actuated by an omniscient Being.

Am I wretched? Then let me realise endless peace and joy, as I am in constant union with a Being who is eternal peace and bliss.

Am I transient? Then let me realise that I am the deathless spirit, as my whole being is permeated by an indivisible, formless, and immortal Soul.

Am I in bondage? Then let me realise perfect freedom, as I am breathing the very atmosphere of emancipation.

Am I small? Then let me realise infinity, as I am ever one with a Being that pervades the whole universe and the limitless beyond.

Am I a creature? Then let me realise God, as I am always dwelling in God and God dwells in me.

